Missouri Mid-South Conference United Church of Christ

Conference Council Meeting

Saturday October 05, 2013

Present: Wes Hurt, Rev. Mauri Peaco, Rhonda Stockglausner, Connie Brooks, Rev. Andy Mockridge, Les Kemp, Gus Elia, Rev. Laura Mignerone, Rev. Alan Gatewood, Mary Lou Datema, Dannie Burk, Rev.Ken Ulmer, Judi Privitt, Joyce Bathke, Rev. David Mehl, Cindy Moeller, Mark Ferbet, Laura Dierberg Ayers

Staff Present: Rev Dr. Allen Fluent (arriving PM), Rev. Dale Parson, Jeremy Force, Rev. Jan Aerie

Absent: Jacquelyne Tyler, Rev. Rick Riedel, Linda Stenger, Jack Wendleton, Rev. Steve Buchholz, Jerry Cundiff

Wes called the meeting to order at 8:46 AM.

Cindy opened the meeting with prayer.

**Minister of Strategic Innovation Report – Rev. Jan Aerie**

Wes invited Council to ask questions/seek input from Jan. Many positive comments were heard from Council members regarding the monumental task that she is asked to do. David reminded us to make sure Jan takes care of herself while she is in this short-time position.

Jan has been in conversation with Dr. Dick Hamm on a regular basis. She is planning to interface with his work, to avoid duplication of tasks. Laura asked for Jan to have these ideas in writing so that others will know how these two positions will overlap.

**Vision Team Update – Joyce Bathke**

The team has been formed. Communication has gone out to Vision team members – Their first meeting will be Oct. 12th , next meeting will be November 2nd. Members are: Rev Paul Koch (chair), Stephanie Beckman, Dr. Linda Bickel, Rev. Traci Blackmon, Rev. Cindy Bumb, Anika Hickman, Dion Landis, Rev. Bob Molsberry, William “Willie” Nation, Rev. Rick Oberle, Peter Oleski, Rev. David Poe, Ula Sao, Sue Simmons, Joyce Bathke

**Shannondale Carbon LLC Update – Wes Hurt**

Another document needed to be signed by Wes, so we now should be registered for “Rain Forest Certification” There is this matrix of certifications that need to be completed. We should hear with a week or two that we are registered, then a press release will be sent out to forest and environmental industry. A press release will also be sent to the national church, and then to the local churches.

Dannie wondered how we are going to address the concerns that have been written in recent e-mails and written correspondence. Wes stated that he has met with EA and WA regarding these issues, and also with Paul of STL association who was sent some correspondence. Wes has planned to personally respond to several individuals who have also expressed concerns. Wes would like to do a combination of face to face along with printed response, because he feels that it is important to speak to these individuals one on one so that they felt like they have been heard.

Andy wondered if this might need to be a discussion point at CAG, and Wes feels like this could be a workshop setting, rather than a plenary session. Finite Carbon has a list of environmental/marketing groups that could possible come and speak at CAG.

Les also emphasized that comments on the Carbon Credit Program have been received from the EA social justice committee. Wes’ game plan is to meet with the leadership of this Committee and possible the entire EA social justice committee Allen feels that this committee just wants to make sure that Conference Council has done their homework in regards to Carbon Credits, which we have done (see previous Council minutes).

Connie reminded us of Betsy Happel’s input regarding the social justice issue many years ago when we were first considering carbon credits. Connie felt that it might be appropriate for us to remind others that we did have a lengthy discussion regarding the theological implications of the carbon credit program.

Wes does feel like he owes EA Social Justice Committee a response, which he will do.

**Consent Agenda Presentation – Joyce Bathke**

Joyce distributed a document regarding consent agendas. Joyce also noted that in order to start using a consent agenda, the board should first adopt a rule or order allowing for the consent agenda process. Joyce fielded questions from Conference Council members. Joyce shared that a lot of boards do use consent agendas in expedite the time.

**Dannie moved that Conference Council moved to consent agenda format. Mark seconded. Laura wondered if this is commensurate with a timed agenda. One abstention. Motion carries.**

This should be started at the January 11th meeting. Minutes and statements of what each committee accomplished will need to be turned in by a deadline, hopefully at least two weeks before.

Laura asked that all documents be sent out two weeks ahead of time and these documents also should be posted on the Conference Council website.

Board Development Proposal/Discussion – Wes Hurt

Wes reminded council of the correspondence related to future board development/training. He would like for us to consider using the two day fall meeting (October) as a board development/training session. Wes would also like for us to consider adding a fifth board meeting, since CAG and October board meetings are so far apart. Executive Committee will also present a proposal based on the input we receive from Council.

*Wes would like Council members to think about this and be prepared to vote on the addition of August Board Meeting addition at our January 11th session.*

Committee Reports

Finance and Administration – Dannie Burk

1. **Upon recommendation (out of committee) of the Finance and Administration Committee, the Conference Council removes Davida Foy Crabtree and adds Allen Fluent to the signatories for the Conference checking and savings accounts. Motion carries.**
2. Les Kemp presented the document “Missouri Mid-South Conference of the United Church of Christ Rules of Procedure for the Conference Annual Gathering” document. It does allow for new business to be introduced at CAG. Dannie asked for any suggestions to be sent to him, and stated that this may be a consent item for our January meeting.
3. Church of the Open Door – If they sell the property, approximately $350K will come to MMS. This will become a separate identified reserve fund within the roster of our invested assets. During the first seven years, 25% going to outdoor ministries, 25% to theological education for a student from MMS area, 50% to MMS operating budget. After the first seven years all earning will be retained by MMS. This asset will be the source of all funds to defend a potential title challenge regarding the ownership of the Church of the Open Door property. Ily put money into this church with a stipulation that if the church is sold it can only got o MMS. Signatures are all complete.
4. Historically, conference has not had a policy to ID and thank individual contributors to the conference. Dannie is going to compile a short policy detailing how this acknowledgement will take place.
5. Completeness Review – Car Phillips and Jean Ridder have accepted the task of the completeness review. (This is an in house review to complete a mini internal audit). A commercial audit will be done every 5 years.
6. People with HR experience are needed to look over our current personnel policies. If you have any suggestions, please let Dannie know.
7. Dannie is working on making sure that all of our newest policies are published and filed in the Conference minutes**.** Our future conference council minutes will have a copy of all of our final copies of documents attached

**Leadership and Development – Laura Dierberg Ayers**

1. Jacqueline Tyler has resigned her position on Conference Council. She was in STL Association (women layperson). Laura asked council members to submit possible replacements to her.
2. The committee will look into recruiting and training for board members.
3. David Mehl is new member from council on this committee.
4. Conference Deacons. Joyce suggested that they might be renamed as conference ambassadors. Our goal is to have about 70 deacons/ambassadors. Laura and Rhonda signed up to join the conference deacon program.
5. Laura will e-mail council members from Zion church regarding leadership. She encouraged us to spend a few minutes to read it.

Local Church Ministry – Rev. Mauri Peaco

Western Association will now be in charge of Women’s Retreat for 2014.

Youth Covenanted Ministry is still active.

Creative Faith Ministry – Jazz Nativity will be December 7 at First Congregational, December 8 at Parkway UCC and December 14th at St. Peters (Washington)

Mission 4/1 was not as successful – didn’t have the widespread appeal that we had hoped.

Spirituality and Faith Formation – This is currently not approved as a covenanted ministry, but there is a small group that is working towards completing the document work needed for this.

Mark Ferbet is the newest member to Local Church Ministry.

Wider Church Ministry – Cindy Moeller

1. Shannondale Covenanted Ministry met with Davida prior to her departure. Paragraph 2-5 of responsibilities was revised. This was done to structure to the story of Shannondale. Shannondale is more of a ministry rather than just a “camp.”
2. **Out of committee to approve Covenanted Ministry for Shannondale Ministries. Motion carries**.
3. Could use a couple more members for the Shannondale covenanted ministry. Presently members are: Les Kemp, Don Cobb, Jack Wendleton, Don Bizer, Cindy Moeller, Jonathan Jones, Myron Ury
4. Mo-Val just finished up their strategic planning and a report is forthcoming. Tina (Connie’s friend) is also working on marketing with Mo Val. They now have a Facebook page, with tumbler and twitter to follow.
5. Jeremy shared that the committee has had several meetings with visioning. Summer camp was up 4% this year with over 100 volunteers. Rental business has about doubled since last year. Next, outdoor education will be explored. Jeremy is also looking into some possible ecumenical possibilities. ACA accreditation process will be taking place next summer.
6. Jamaica project – Linda Adams is the primary sponsor. She has asked Linda to let us know how we can support them. If anyone is interested in helping to serve on this committee, please see Cindy.

Rev. Rick Riedel with also be appointed to a committee pending discussion with Rick and committee chairs.

Discussion of Approaches to Conference Minister Search – Wes Hurt and Allen Fluent

Wes introduced a possible paradigm of a shared conference minister. Wes shared this information at the August council meeting and it warrants further discussion. Wes has asked for a proposal from two adjoining (KS/OK and Illinois South conferences). Wes feels like these conferences are waiting to see how council feels about this before they proceed.

1. Approach it from the standpoint that person will be interim. They would serve a term of a couple of years (or so), while we conduct a search for a settled conference minister. Leadership development would serve as the search committee, along with selection of two others (from moderator). Council votes on this selection.
2. Leadership then appoints a search committee (9 people), they conduct a search and council presents the candidate to conference for approval (and vote).

Council then had discussion regarding possibility of sharing a conference minister with KS/OK and Illinois South. This proposal would share staff but maintain the current MMS boundaries. We are still in the discovery phase of how we want MMS conference to look in the future.

Rev. Ken Ulmer pondered a few items:

1. Independence governance – 3-5 states here that are all independently governed (and budgets)
2. Four arenas to be unpacked

\*ID the business services that will be shared (search and call, accounting, group buying)

\*technology required to support a multi-state leadership team

\*skills and experience we want from the leadership team

\*ID programs to be shared on a multi conference basis and preliminary estimate on a multi conference leadership team

Wes’ proposal – if we think we should explore other ways of establishing conference leadership as it related to conference ministry, consider taking an approach that is used in Wes industry. We could prepare a request for proposal (RFP), we state what our values are, what we are looking for, we outline a framework (that includes measureable and tangible items that are important to us). This would give these individuals an idea of what is important to us. If they feel that they can’t meet the goals that we have outlined, then it would be done. This would avoid us throwing out a blank page saying, “What do you think?”

We need to define what our mission is so that we can define it for the other group.

Executive Committee could define a proposal and seek feedback from the Council

Also consider the possibility that David Mehl suggested: appoint a designated (interim) minister for a 3-5 year period that would allow us time to research the possibility of sharing with KS/OK and Illinois South. Further down the road, we could possibly consider sharing resources with other conferences.

This proposal would only be informational at this point, and no formal decision is being made. It is simply a way of organizing all of the information that has been presented .

Mary Lou would also like to see a written response stating why they would be interested in seeking a co-conference minister with us.

Alan shared that it might also be helpful to set up some sort of electronic arena for conference council members (possibly entire conference) to express their thoughts regarding their comments on co-conference minister.

**Connie moved that Exec Committee will develop an RFP (request for proposal), so that we can explore co- conference leadership -- which will be brought back to the Conference Council. Mark seconded. One nay. One abstention. Motion carries.**

We are interested in conversations with these two conferences, but we are not ready to consider this possibility right now. We need someone right now that can lead us through a 3 year (or so) process that will help us discern where we want our leadership to be at that point.

Wes will share with Susan that co-conference leadership is a consideration, but not at this time.

We need to take 4-6 months to find a designated conference minister, and then take 36 months (or so) to explore co-conference leadership.

As a designated conference minister, the governing body will need to vote on it at the beginning of the tenure and again at the end of the term. Geoffrey may provide candidates for us, search committee will do the research of those candidates, and then recommend ONE candidate to Council and Conference for a vote (hopefully by CAG).

Next step: Wes will contact Cleveland that we would like a designated called conference minister. Leadership needs to come up with 9 people to form a search committee, and they will narrow it down to one candidate. Council will then vote on that candidate and then the delegates will then vote on it at a specially called meeting or CAG (whichever comes first)

**Ken made a motion: Rhonda seconded: Council directs Moderator to contact national office for candidates for a called designated minister.**

**That will launch the leadership team creation for a search committee (9), the search committee will bring recommendation to Council and then to Conference for a vote.**

Business for setting Council Goals for 2013-2014 and new business items will be sent out via e-mail.

Wes stated that he will put a summary (draft) of October to be published in the E Courier.

Closing prayer and adjournment at3:26 PM